

CROW

by Edgar J. Shockley III

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Dec. 26, 1956. Morning. Shortly, after the segregation boycott in Montgomery, the buses have been outlawed. Mr. Sam enters from the darkness and sits on a bus-stop bench.

MR SAM

Ain't nobody gonna make me move. I know my rights. De Supreme Court of dese United States says dat I kin set anywhar I wants tah an' I want tah set right chere, in de front of de bus. Now ain't no use to ya'll gettin' all riled an upset cause I ain't gonna move an' you cain't make me move; so you might as well go on to de back an' get one of dem seats an set down an' enjoy your trip...Yes sir; maybe I is bein' just a mite uppity, an' if I is, den you must excuse me. It's just dat I been waitin' so long for this day to come dat I kin hardly control myself....

(He awakens from his fantasy.)

Yes sir! Dat's jus' how I'm gonna say it! De furst cracker whut comes an' tries tah make me move gits it full blast with both barrels. Yes siree, I's got me rights. I's a citizen, bonefied and sanctified. I got the Lawd in heaven and de Federal Government here on earth backin' me up. Cain't nobody beat a han' like gat. Yes sir, it sho' is a mighty fine day.

(He checks the horizon for a bus.)

I hope I ain't got to start no ruckus. You never kin tell whut'll happen once folks start tah git excited. Nawsir, I'd best try tah keep things calm. De las thing I want is tah git my haid broke. But it's like my boy Lucus used tah always say, "If you cain't live like a man den dere ain't no use tah livin' a'tall." Yep, dat Lucus was somethin' else. Boy wouldn't take nothin' from nobody; cullered, white nor otherwise. If you was arguin' de right den you was alright; but if you was wrong, dat boy'd call you down so quick...

(PAUSE)

Boy like gat don't live long hereabouts. I tried tah tell 'im but how do you tell a man not to be what he is? Naw, dat boy had tah die. Dem white folks didn't kill 'im, bein' born killed 'im, bein' born cullered killed 'im. Dem white folks was only doin' what white folks does when a niggah sets down in the front of de bus. Dey started tah sassin' 'im an' he sassed 'em right back. Dey started tah cussin' at 'im an spittin' on 'im; an' he cussed 'em right back, didn't spit on nobody though, thought that were the lowest thing on God's green earth. Den dey started tah beatin' 'im an beatin' 'im...I don't think those white folks meant tah kill 'im; dey just beat my boy so bad...Well, Lucus, I'm here now. I told you one day I'd ride dis bus, an' set down front, an' I'd just dare the world; we'd double dare de world.

(Notices the approaching bus)

Here come dat old K bus now. Sure hope I don't have tah start no ruckus. You know, Lucus, dem white folks still don't take too kindly to a niggah settin' in de front an I ain't as strong as I used to be when you was alive, boy...Sho hope Mr. Tannen ain't on board, I'm too old tah find me no new job.

(The bus pulls in front.)

Dem white folks sho looks mean. Is dat Mistah Tannen over dere on de othah' side of the aisle? Lucus I...

(Addressing the bus driver.)

Yessir?...Nawsir, I ain't deaf, sir...Is anything de matter? Nawsir. Nothin's wrong...Is I gettin' on?.....Nawsir.

(The bus pulls off. Long fade to black.)

THE END